



COURANT



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Au Courant

Miss Charity Function often complained of the many tribulations she was forced to undergo. The tragic events of her life had begun at the tepid age of two, when she had fallen from her playpen, and continued in traumatic tremors through the years which culminated one drizzly afternoon in her garden. At 2:42 Miss Function succumbed to the combined forces of unprecedented high blood pressure and profusely sweating palms while attempting to pommel three molehills in the nasturtium patch. For Charity it was the ultimate in a series of mountain ranges which had erupted into her tundra-like existence, and she, like an overdue library book, expired. She had spent her entire life making mountains out of molehills, because she had never been faced with a real mountain.

D.L.C.

Lessie

come,

FIGHT,

for

PEACE.

AND KNOW

no passion

for love. Convince me,

THIS IS TRUE.

reason is dislike,

use HATE

yourself, is only

reflected.

Spit.

winds also blow in your direction.

CHER LEWIS

Callous Calamity

Enraptured by life's circus
I watch suspended from a cobweb,
Soon the hungry spider returns —
And the last sound is applause.

CONNIE COUGHLAN





Oh You Take The High Road

A platform, set up much like a political convention, dominates the stage. Polonius, dressed in brightly colored feathers and light bulbs of various colors which flash at intervals, sits cross-legged on the platform. A button on his forehead blinks in shocking pink, spelling "WOW". A sign above his head proclaims loudly "Fly Now! Discover Your World! Apply Here!" He hums loudly and poorly in a monotone, but he makes elaborate gestures, suggesting that he believes he sings quite well. Ophelia, dressed in a conventional Villager shirt-waist, enters.

POL. (He takes no notice of Ophelia) WOW. WOW.

OPH. (She is rather taken aback at the reception. She stares, takes a step forward, giggles, and hurriedly covers her mouth) Uh, Good morning

POL. (He stares ahead and chants reverently) I encompass the four continents. I encompass the four continents. I . . .

OPH. Encompass four continents? You?

POL. Yeah baby. . .four. (This is said proudly, albeit with some vagueness. He adds more humbly) Only four. This WOW, Wesson Oil and water, — read about it in **Newsweek**, baby. I'm on the cover — this WOW enlarges my mind. With WOW I am omnipotent, omniscient, in control, (He stretches his arms during his speech until they are fully extended) the cause, the author of all things, infinite, eternal. . . but (He drops his arms and adds disappointedly) only over four continents. Even WOW has its limits. Only four. BUT there are others. BAH—that's five, and WHO, walrus hair and okra, gets you up to six. Of course, if you get really good you can always switch to Green Oats and Dust, but no one

has ever reached THAT Nirvana; it's almost impossible to reach seven continents in your high. But who wants to see Antartica anyway?

OPH. (Politely) It sounds utterly fascinating.

POL. I read you right down to the bottom of your little pink toes, baby. Have some. (He extends a small pink box)

OPH. (She glances wildly about her, as though trapped) I, uh. . .

POL. Oh come on. See— you're full of inhibitions; it isn't natural. Society's got a strangular grip on you—bulging your Adam's apple out of proportion. C'mon. Afraid of what Daddy's going to say? (He begins to speak pompously) Inhibited by your inhibitions, you must learn to inhibit your inhibitions and. . .uh. . .uh (He forgets what he is going to say)

OPH. (Helpfully) I'm inhibited.

POL. Are you? Well then, let WOW help you out. No? Well there are plenty of other things to take. (He begins to recite slowly and deliberately, in his steady monotone)
There was a young lass from Aberdeen
Incapable of turning on to the scene.
Separating her from the Truth was a ravine
Of dimensions infinitely elephantine.
Thus did naiveté her status demean.
But she was introduced on her T.V. screen
(Mass Media—McLuhan's mean)
To a new life—stimulus could subvene
And expand life through new highs serene.
(He begins to speed up and recite the following like an alphabet) Caffeine, benzine, chlorine, art obscene, velveteen, sardine, gasoline, a yellow submarine, protein, tangerine, acetylene, and nicotine. (He runs down)

OPH. (Uncomfortably) Heh. ('To Polonius, who has begun to doze) HEY!

POL. (Awakening suddenly) —and nicotine. (Pauses) Iambic pentameter it's not, but it was better in the original Sanskrit. The idea's that old. Enlarge your mind baby. You only use a tiny proportion of it. O-N-E-T-I-N-Y-P-R-O-P-O-R-T-I-O-N. So said the venerable scientist we shall long remember—Fulton. Fly to the four continents. Enlarge your mind. It's what I did to mine, and look at me, a creative genius!

OPH. But I'm in perfect power of myself as I am.

POL. (Making a pouncing motion) Ah ha! So you THINK, but man's got to have his high. It makes life so much more bearable. Is the sky blue?

OPH. Of course, I can see that.

POL. Ah, but get your high, and it will be bluer. Do you think you are a creative artist?

OPH. Well. . .uh. . .not really, although I do play chopsticks on the piano.

POL. Ah, but reach your high, and you will know you are a creative artist. Do you love me?

OPH. (Hurriedly) NO!. . .uh, what I mean is, I hardly know you. Besides, I love Hamlet.

POL. Ah, but achieve your Nirvana, and you will love anyone.

OPH. Anyone?

POL. Everyone. You will be unable to hate.

OPH. It sounds useful in any case.

POL. Useful?! (He begins to crawl toward her as though he were going to impart a great secret, but he soon forgets what he is doing and falls asleep. Ophelia, who has been slowly backing away from Polonius, sees her opportunity to leave and exits quietly).

Scene 2. Ophelia enters running breathlessly. Polonius seated on the platform, appears to be dozing.

OPH. Polonius! Polonius! (Polonius opens one eye and stares at her, and Ophelia, needing no extra encouragement, begins) I was thinking about what you'd told me this morning, when I came across Hamlet, moping in the halls. "Harry, dear" I said. (She blushes) That's what I like to call him, you see. "Harry, listen!", and I told him about what you said. Immediately a change came over him, and he grabbed me fiercely by the shoulders. He began to talk in riddles, and I was unable to understand a thing he said. "Ophelia" he began, "Ophelia," with great intensity, "Why?" I laughed. . . what else could I do? . . . spit in his eye? "Because," I replied, "It gives you great insight to things you might otherwise ignore. I am interested in the exploration of myself." Then I got mad, because I added "I guess you're not, and that's probably the difference between us." I'd never admitted that before, and I guess it shook him, because he remained silent for awhile. When he began to speak again, he spoke deliberately and slowly. "You" he said, "are content to rest in this "high", the glorious nonentity of apathy, while I must feel only apathy for nonentity, and that—that is the difference between us." He would have left after that, because I had made no reaction to his statement. To tell you the truth, I didn't understand it at all. However, I stopped him. "What could be more important in a world where people are unhappy without it?" He sighed and asked me whether or not I loved him. "Yes" I said, "but when I achieve my high, I will love everyone." "But will you love me most?" asked Hamlet in a manner I found disgustingly self-oriented. "I'll love

everyone” I said, “Because I’ll hate no one.” Hamlet actually began to shake. “No! You won’t! But neither will you love! How can you feel love without any antithesis to it? What you’re explaining to me,” shouted Hamlet, now gripping my my shoulders fiercely. See? You can see the marks. “What you’re explaining to me is a sentiment equally distributed and rationed to all . . . a mild contentment; pleasurable amiability if you will. . .but NOT love! Never love!” By this time I was really mad and confused, if you know what I mean. He was shaking. “But at least,” I began, “At least there will be peace on earth.” His arms dropped suddenly, as if I’d given him an electric shock. “Yes,” he said calmly and began slowly to walk away. “Peace on earth. Peace on earth everyone. . . to good men of no will” (There is a pause) And he disappeared. (Pause, then she says, almost desperately) What does it mean? (There is a long silence, then Ophelia shouts) HEY!

POL. (He has been dozing, but awakes suddenly) Yeah! WOW . . .
WOW

OPH. Well, does he love me?

POL. I love you baby. Have some WOW

OPH. I . . . I don’t know if I should after what Hamlet. . .

POL. But it’s so easy. Separate yourself from life’s problems, I’ll bet you anything Hamlet has an ulcer. He’ll end up eating baby food and milk and die at an early age because his arteries have hardened up from excessive anxiety. Let WOW do your work for you, and you in your hammock will life pass by; for you will be contented, in Hamlet’s disgusting terminology, with glorious “nonentity of apathy”, while he, in his static leaps and dives between hate and passion, must fluctuate like inflation rates in a newly-founded republic.

OPH. (After some deliberation) You know, you may have a point there.

POL. Yeah. (The light fades, until we see only WOW flashing on and off in the dim light. We see the vague outlines of Polonius and Ophelia. Polonius is handing her something. As the light comes on again, Polonius can be seen once more sitting cross-legged on the platform. This time Ophelia, dressed in a manner similar to Polonius, is sitting on the platform as well. She sways in a rhythmic manner. She must appear quite wild and savage in comparison to the rather passive Polonius.)

OPH. (Without control) WOW WOW WOW (Now she appears almost reverent) Oh WOW, you are the beginning and the end. Backwards and forwards, you remain WOW. Inside you, within you, without you, you are my three-dimensional WOW. Turn you upside down, and you become my MOM. You nurse me throughout my life, for without you I would not exist. I have been born into a new experience, and you will care for me until I have no further use of you; and I can move into larger fields of five, even six, continents. WOW, with you I am omnipotent, invulnerable, the master of four continents. (She begins to sway, now completely out of control, and Polonius, who has been nodding patiently and a little bit condescendingly, begins to take alarm) Master of the master, WOW WOW.

POL. Yeah, Ophelia; that's great, baby, but cool it a little, huh?

OPH. Yes, WOW, I am the master. But watch me as I fly, as I walk on water. (She is silent for a moment as the idea begins to take hold) Yes. Yes. I shall walk on water. (She gets off the platform. One must be practical. How else does the master span four continents? Row? No, a master must retain dignity. He does not row. I shall walk on water. (She dances off stage)

**

POL. (He struggles to get up, but he falls repeatedly, tripping over his feathers and lights, all the while muttering) Give a person a little high and he thinks he's God. How many times do I have to say that only comes later? NO, she can't stick to four continents. She has to see the — (A splash is heard off stage) world. (He pauses) She. . .uh. . .uh. . . (He forgets what he is going to say and pauses. There is a long silence during which the only movement is the flashing WOW sign. Soon Polonius begins to recite, like a nursery rhyme)
Today as in the times of Aegospotami,
In Poughkeepsie and on the river Thai,
Man his deeds to glorify,
For living find an alibi,
His existence attempt to justify,
Or his pleasures to intensify,
Has needed to establish an ally.
Whether smoked or drunk, I'll certify,
Most men must always testify
Their life, their tears before they die
By getting drunk. Though it may mystify
Aeons of civilization with the question "why?"
One cannot tell—or logic apply,
But man must always have a high.
curtain

Dorothy Cheney

Running . . .

running into
dazzling dizziness
of seas of feelings
and bagsful of people -
life's endless list
in times and places
of faces -
all searching in
crooked dreams
of hopeful flowers
of moons and milky ways
of untouchable
of respectable
belonging.

DIYAN DRISCOLL



What Force?

I often wonder while I am alone
Why it is that some men must leave this world
Before one half their lives are even known
And but a small part of their work unfurled.

The departure is always so sudden
And leaving no time in which to prepare
For the eternal trip they are bidden
Or endless burden of time they will bear.

It seems so improbable that there be
A being which can guide man's very fate.
A force so great its wisdom is the key
To see beyond the bounds of love or hate.

The death of man no one can comprehend;
No soul shall find it till the very end.

JANE JOUETT



Modest Proposal

It is a disgraceful reflection upon this country that, after seven years of fighting, our soldiers are still unable to conquer the peasant army of the Viet Cong. This situation has been exploited by the Communist powers whose vile propaganda now threatens to undermine our prestigious position in international affairs. If these conditions are allowed to continue, we shall soon lose many disillusioned allies to the Communist bloc, resulting in a severe blow to the institution of democracy.

More specifically, the inability to achieve military victory is a source of great humiliation to the American male, whose manhood is now being seriously challenged. Despite his superior education, he cannot defeat an illiterate foe. Even his modern equipment does not enable him to overcome the soldier of a technologically unsophisticated country. The \$25,000,000 per year allotted to the American war effort is apparently useless. (Authenticity of all figures quoted is dependent upon the credibility gap.) Neither is this a question of sheer physical strength, as our men outnumber the North Vietnamese forces 500,000 to 275,000. In addition, the majority of the enemy soldiers suffer from malnutrition and have half the life expectancy of our men.

Clearly, the American soldier is lacking in some undefinable quality. Various persons have attempted to discover and subsequently inject this needed quality into our men. However, all have failed: Paris Island sergeants, U.S.O. officials, Saigon barmaids. Therefore, being extremely concerned with this appalling situation and desirous of helping our country, I offer my own solution.

From the time of the Trojan War, when Penthesilea led the Amazons into battle against the Greeks, women have been credited with possessing the true warrior spirit. It is also generally recognized that women have greater stamina than men. I, therefore, propose that

the United States government discontinue the present draft system at once, and institute conscription for women. However, it should not be made public that these recruits are being sent to fight, as this would only further humiliate our men. Rather, they should be sent ostensibly as advisors, as this has always been an acceptable female role. It is hoped that once in Vietnam, following the previous example, they will be able to discover ways of engaging in combat, while still maintaining their status as advisors.

The advantages of such a system are obvious. As a result of the innate fighting ability of women, the Viet Cong will be quickly repulsed. And due to female wiles, our men will be convinced that they themselves are responsible for the victory. Thus a great threat to the ego of the American male will be removed and his morale restored. If, however, the Viet Cong retaliate and send their women to the front, the situation will be greatly altered. (It has been rumored that this strategy has already been employed by the Viet Cong. However, the instances have been few, although our soldiers have capitalized upon them as a face saving justification of their inability to achieve victory.) This simply reemphasizes the need for our women to maintain their covers as advisors, in order that they can defeat the Viet Cong before the North Vietnamese government learns the truth and imitates our tactics.

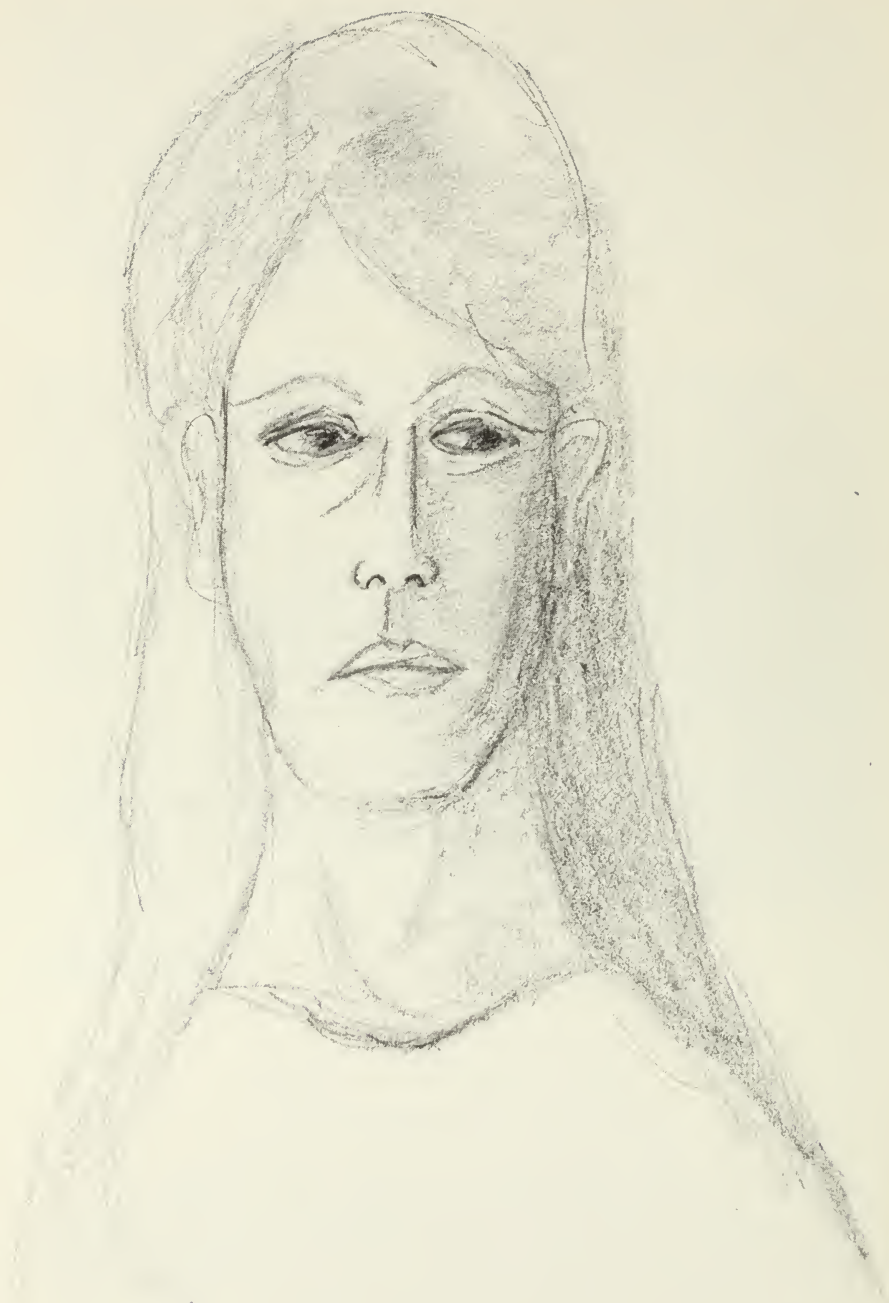
In addition to the main advantages I have cited, my proposal has several auxiliary benefits. It has always been recognized that college educations are wasted on most women, but until now nothing could be done to correct the situation. However, under my plan, girls would be drafted upon completion of high school, thereby relieving the severe competition in college admissions.

As the majority of bastard children are attributed to girls who have no particular vocation, my proposal would also erase illegitimacy, or at least remove it from our country. Under this plan, the divorce rate would also be lowered. Allowing for moderate casualties sustained by our women in combat, the male-female ratio in the United States would become more equal. There would, therefore, be fewer single girls to tempt men into leaving their wives. With fewer women there will be fewer marriages and those of the older generation will not be obliged to waste so much of their money on dowries.

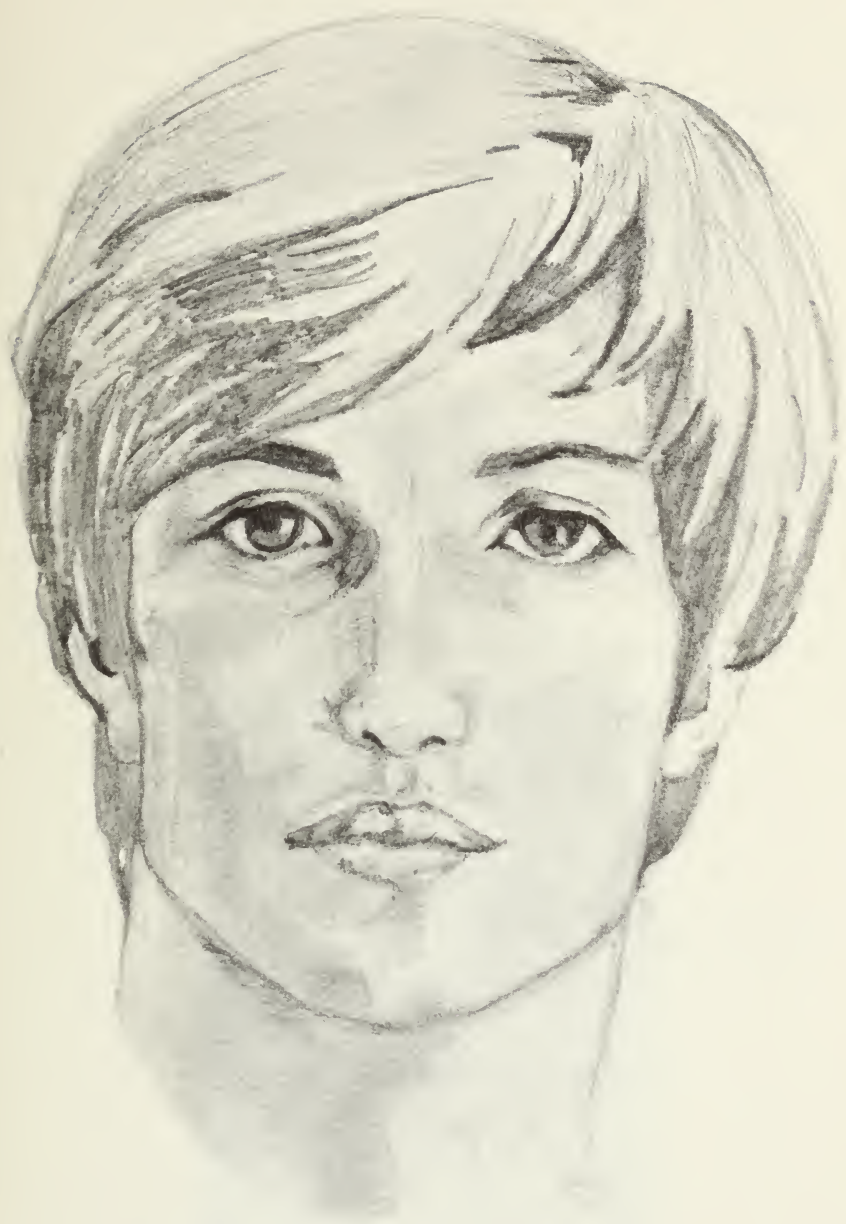
The question of money brings me to the objection raised against the proposal - that the cost of training the women will not be compensated for by the results. However, having recently visited one of our more progressive girl's schools, I have become convinced that this would not be the case. The institution has already initiated a course in Self-Defense for Women, and is currently nurturing the female warrior instincts of its students by the production of such plays as Anouilh's **The Lark**, which glorifies the mighty soldier, Joan of Arc. If all schools were to follow such programs, army training camps would no longer be necessary, thus saving the government and the taxpayers considerable expense.

Having presented my proposal, I now humbly petition the government to execute my suggestions. I seek no personal advantage, being past the age of fighting, other than the satisfaction of redeeming my country's name and honor.

Diane Coggan



Chen G.



J.H.L. III

A train of lost to be,
 pulls into the ghetto
on time, and to the rhythm of passenger and outbound shocking
 statistics.
No one stands in the station in tears to wave this freight.
Death is surely in the exhaust,
 comprised of smoke and bad odor.
 I've heard,
the ride is short,
 some would wish it shorter,
but not for the price of their ticket.
But often on hot nights or funny rainy ones
the engine roars with glee,
 I've heard.

CHER LEWIS



The Death Of A Robot

Face after empty face goes rushing by
Not resting for a moment 'till sundown,
And ceasing at last with a weary sigh
This robot of society gazes around
And looks and stares and never sees a thing,
But a dream of himself a greater man
And in his mechanical mind do ring
All his thoughts of where he may one day stand.
And upon sipping his usual drink,
He looks through the window and sees a glow
Of a ball of fire as the sun does sink.
First seeing beauty he begins to know
What a meaningless life he has led.
As we look closer now — the robot is dead.

HILARY BENNETT

The Human Instinct

What is this self that is our sole view of life, and yet is the only thing we can never fully view? Is there an essence to every individual which is unique, or is an individual formed by random distribution of certain thought processes? Is it possible to divorce oneself completely from outside influences and concentrate on discovering one's unadulterated emotions, or do all our sentiments stem from reactions with, to, or against other individuals? More generally, what is man - a pretentious animal with intimations of the immortal, or a truly superior, rational, being whose absurd and paradoxical actions have validity in the universe?

Most cognizant humans, whether acknowledging the presence of a supreme deity or denying its existence, will agree to man's humble origin - that of evolution from "lower" species of animal. If this is accepted, how can a human believe that he is set in a God's image? How can he have the audacity to assume that he exists to fulfill a specific, preordained mission? More than his rational mind, for porpoises too have rational minds, man's overwhelming optimism and egocentricity are what has allowed human civilization to survive. This is the key also to the individual mind. The unshakeable faith in one's own existence, rationality, and superiority is what prevents the human race from being intelligent apes. The fact that we feel we can better our world, our position in society or our government is the one constructive force opposing complete nihilism, hedonism, and anarchy. Individuals lose sight of universal goals but they never, unless on the brink of suicide, lose the feeling of their own individual superiority and innate ability to solve universal problems. This desire to express one's superiority and uniqueness is the driving force behind individual, national, and world-wide achievement. Everyone is grasping for the opportunity to prove that his particular position in life is unique and superior to all others.

Thus, although most people consciously realize the probability that someone will be superior to them in every aspect, they continue to believe inwardly that they are the elect, and they manifest this belief by everything in which they attempt to excel.

This basic optimism is the essence of each individual, his prime motivation and essential excuse for existing. It is also the essence of man's conscious and unconscious rationality, and the reason he can continue to question, to despair, to deny, to oppress and finally to reconcile himself without committing mass suicide.

Diane Russell



Haiku

Moon, like a bubble
Floats in early morning sky;
. . . popped by a sun ray.

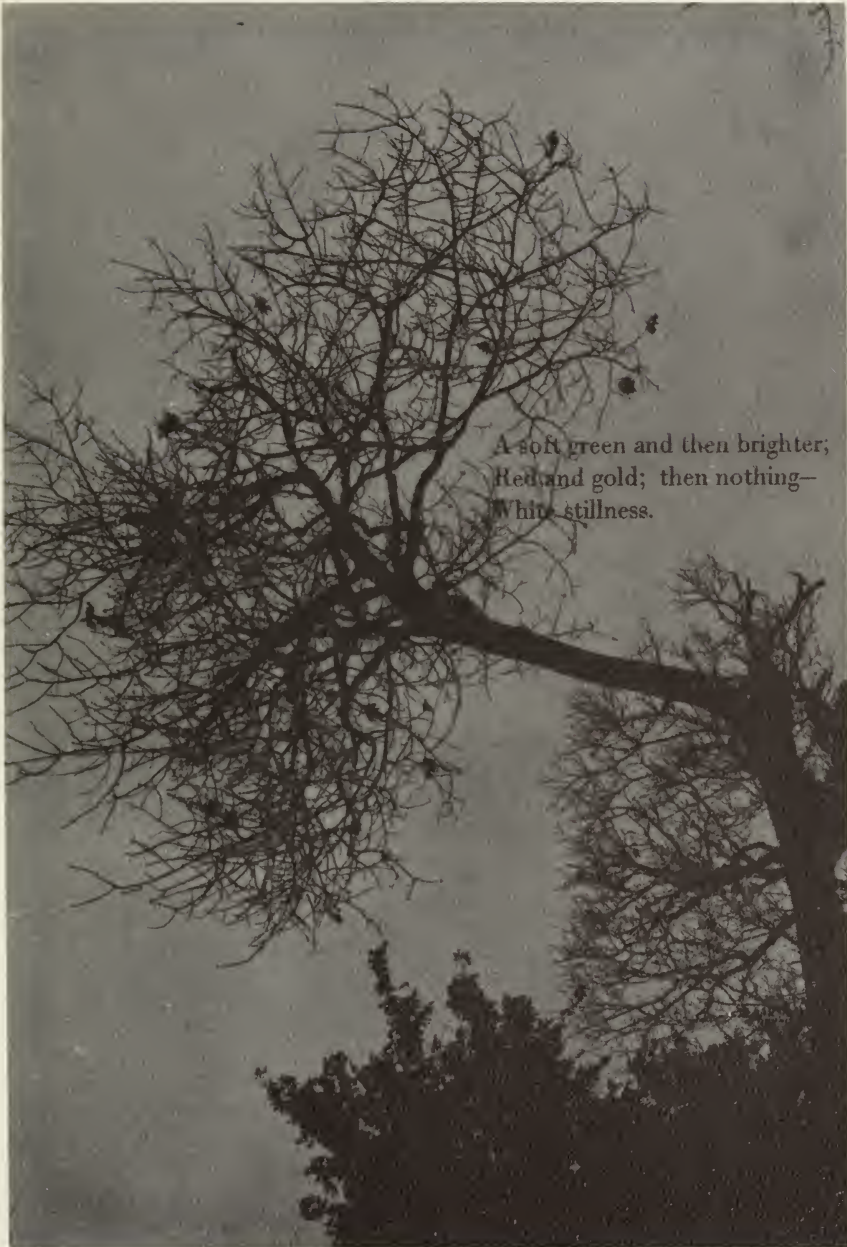
LESLIE BREED

Fragile lady slippers,
Are you well hidden in the woods?
Hush, a child comes.

MARGARET GAY

Freshly fallen snow
Remembers someone's passing,
Though it may be night.

MADELON CURTIS



A soft green and then brighter;
Red and gold; then nothing—
White stillness.

Penny In The Well

"A HIGHLY ABSURD SCENE"

SET: An arbor girded with flowers, emitting the aroma of forbidden desires. In the middle of the paradise is a well, decorated with garlands, as if a feast were to begin. There are no people on stage, except three large bas-relief x's as if to indicate where the "actors" must rivet themselves. Taking a look at the audience, one sees looks of boredom and apathy. The question is raised: "Has not the play begun, why do they all sit as if nothing happened?"

CHARACTERS

Mostly non de script, (i.e. not in the play).

Penny, girl muse

Nicky, boy muse

Herby, friendly doctor

Ralph, DIRECTOR in residence

Scene x: This is a non-denominatorial, non-sectarian play, but you guys have to play by the rules, no rosaries or Channukah Joes on my stage.

Non de script 1: This is a helluva way to spend an evening. What are those fools doing?

Non de script 1-a: Can't you see that this is a deep philosophical play, forcing us to identify and see into ourselves by watching the "non-action" of the players?

Non de script 4-f: Look, someone's going to come on the stage. Could it be? Why yes!! It is . . . a character.

(All eyes swing to the stage just in time to see a beautiful, young girl come onto the stage. She looks as a young perturbed beauty should: very normal. She carries a bag of marbles and wears anachronistic button shoes, a mini-dress and

heavy eye make-up to help her look even more bleary than normal. She hums and sings an aimless tune, while dropping marbles on the ground and looking astounded every time this occurs:)

“Looks like glass, feels like glass,

(Drops it) it is glass!

(Repeats this same action, every time, being careful not to move off her designated cross, thus not being able to retrieve her marbles.

After stage front is completely covered with multicolored half marbles (the result of whole ones being dropped—for the benefit of our nondescript audience.) Penny’s face then goes through many weird contortions as if attempting to make a decision:

“To step or not to step, **that** is, the question, whether to accept, or, make the proof myself as to the safety of the world not of the circle. I, notice, am directed to stay herewith by Ralph

(voice from beneath): “That’s right baby and we don’t want no slip-ups or it’ll be curtains for you.”

(Penny Continues)

lost marbles and I must retrieve them, but “le question est,” how? How not to defy both worlds and satisfy myself? What will the parents think when they know my marbles are gone, just think of all the money to repair them. Those marbles were my present for good behavior. Thinking came after I colored them every night and drew pretty designs around the edges.

(Suddenly the dropping wall of flowers is drawn aside dramatically. Herby jumps to his blue cross on the floor, brandishing a pencil as if intending to kill the girl)

H: I heard that.

P: What?

H: You know, tell me.

P: Marbles are round, hard to get hold of, for a penny.

H: A thought for your penny.

P: Marbles is a game I was taught when just young, or was it just old. Out of the mouths of . . .

H: Come closer, your thoughts are not coming through.

P: The parents always said that my marbles would come in handy. It was only when I broke them that any one took notice.

H: I didn't get that, repeat it please. (He scratches his head while unseeingly writing down everything he sees.) I see. You are a basically stable child who has lacked parental attention, thus has reverted to childish games. "When I was a child I spake as a child, but when I was a man I learned to play in private."

P: Hmm, Hmm, Children are non-entities now, we are adults before we can be children. Do not say I am young. We all know that we are old beyond our years.

H: My dear, now everything can't be as bad as that. We all understand you. We want to hear, but do come closer.

P: I do wish I could move. My marbles are going . . . farther . . . farther . . . awaaay.

H: Child, there is nothing wrong with you. You are normal. Everyone is normal. Normal . . . Narmal . . . Marmal . . . No deviates. Don't want to hear it . . . Soon a boy will enter your life. Everything will be fine: life will be simple. No worries for you, no clients, no patients for me, no MONEY. OH MY, OOOH, MY.

(Ralph stomps in)

R: Baby, baby what are you trying to do to the scene, man. Those aren't your lines. That just isn't the way to play it. You're the shrink, so play the part already. None of this normal bunk. This kid is sick, she's out of her circle. Get with it.

(Ralph continues to lecture Herby. Stage front presents Nicky entering. There is now a steady cadence of mingled voices. The audience becomes restless. A hum is heard:

Non de script IBM: I really don't think this is fair. We just are not on these people. They are not for real. Why can't I identify? They're excluding us!!! It's like the re-incarnation of the two ring circus. I knew it would never make it.

Non de script, critic: Listen, Mac, some of us want to see the uhm, whatever it is, and if you don't like it. **LEAVE.** Money is only a representation of something that is not there anyway. Especially after King John's err, Claudi . . .

Non de script ABC: (Inspid hot-house voice) It's all very simple. The only reason we can't identify is because we are too objective. (Very proud that **HE** has found **THE** answer.)

(Nicky enters. He is handsome, but looks distracted while reading. Finally he slips on the marbles:

N: Marbles, marbles, everywhere. But who lost them?
(All this time Penny's attention has been drawn to the dashing Nicky. She looks enraptured:)

P: Accept, always accept "Why can't you young people accept these things?" My mother is always right. I will accept this: I have lost all my marbles. A boy has stepped on them and crushed them as Mann's law did pimps. Can't he see that here was sweetness, goodness, and light? All could have been his, if only he had pasted them together. Marbles truly do help to stretch the mind.

N: An arbor, a haven to think deep thoughts. Oh the flowers that adorn it are so beautiful. A rose! but always surrounded by her thorns to prevent anyone from picking her. (Sits down on the bench and begins to gather in the marbles.)

H: (Screams) RALPH! ! ! I am a doctor. I see this girl, as I see this girl. Don't tell me how to run my business.

R: Oh Boy. (great sigh) Now the clown thinks he's a doc. You're an actor. So play the part. You really blew it. Nick's on the stage and you haven't even briefed Penny on her part. We've got to know what the boy is thinking! How else but through the girl? Oh, I just fail to believe it. Well, we'll try to patch this mess up. Give Nicky the cue and improvise from there. Play it from your life's blood. (He pushes Herby from his cross, but

Herby cannot move. Herby sways from side to side but finally catches his balance)

H: (To Nicky) Here's a Penny for your thoughts. (Aside) OH GAWD! I'm selling my soul by doing this two bit part.

N: Descartes always says to make your own proof, but you can't prove that by me.

P: (Has been nervously playing with her shoes, lacing and unlacing them. She manages to rip off a button in the process):
Now I've done it, I'm really going to be killed when they see I've lost my buttons, too. I can't seem to hold on...to anything.

(To no one in particular):

What do you think?

N & H: Generally I don't...

(Herby hears this, glances sharply at Nicky, scribbles madly and smugly walks off stage, in Hitleristic manner, job completed.)

H: Mad all of them, mad. Don't see where they are going, really don't want to. REALLY (Sniffs. Falls on some of Penny's mar-

bles. Slumps out, holding lower back and swearing under his breath):
No scruples. Why can't they tidy up? Expect us to clean up for
for them. Messy, very messy.

N: (Has shrugged off H's comments and starts to read again. Has
taken no visible notice of Penny)

P: (Walks to the arbor and starts to pick flowers, making a garland
at the same time. Then proceeds to the well, gracefully swings
herself up and sits on the edge as if to make a wish:)
Why doesn't anyone care? I'm unloved. Oh, well, oh, well. Take
me, I'm yours. A Penny for a wish come true.
(SUDDENLY! Nick jumps from the bench and grabs her arm.)

N: No. Don't do it.

P: Will you play marbles with me?

N: I thought perhaps you would debase my value. I love you more
than my leather bound collection of pornography.

(Ralph stomps in)

R: Kids, kids! Not so much emotion. Be modern. It's not chic to
lose your cool. You know she'll never do it. The marbles, but
never the well, YOU!! Fine people, (addresses the audience) I
just want to tell you a little about our play tonight. . .

(The sound of tearing rope is heard and the sky (Scenery) falls down.
There is much movement backstage: a splash, perhaps coins in the
fountain. All is Uncertain.)

Non de script IBM: What would Freud do?

Non de script child: "Oh, Momma can this really be the end?"*

Non de script momma: "Is that some kind of joke?!"*

— C U R T A I N —

* Lyrics from songs by Bob Dylan

NANCY ROBERTS



The White Uncertain Light . . .

The white uncertain light of early dawn
dissolves the last dispersing clouds of night
and now, diurnal curtains, newly drawn,
erase the trace of night's reluctant flight.
Each dormant man, by light from asleep bestirred,
shows by his dress a different race or creed;
a begging Saddhu, to us quite absurd,
accepts and is accepted by each breed.
The rasping call of crows disturbs his sleep
— he moves his body out of the street drain
and sagely comments, peering toward the west,
that he has yet to see December rain.
Then, startled, as he gazes at the sky,
he sees fat shining drops cascading by.

MARGARET CHENEY

The Fugitive

A speck of sand sits on the beach,
Keeps not his friends, escapes his foes,
And moves along not quite in reach
Of those pursuing on their toes.

He's pushed along, day after day,
By changing winds and rays of heat
Who seldom ask and never say
If he should mind their chaffing feet.

As time moves on so does this speck,
Won't ring, drifting, his thoughts a wreck,
Until one day, tossed from his deck,
He drowns, alone.

LINDSAY WHITCOMB

The Piping Of Pan

And we spun about,
Till the whole world was flying with laughter,
And looked up to the sky
That fled by on Lancer's feet.
And somewhere I heard
the piping of Pan.

ELLEN JUNKER



Trite Flight

A crumpled dog-eared sign, made much the worse for several tortilla crumb battles which had ravaged across its surfaces during the past months, proclaimed with ecstatic ennui in luminous orange lettering that the company had become the seventy-third airline to possess a jet, and indeed, the craft could be seen across the field, superciliously pacing the runway. It had been bought, unfortunately, from the Irish airlines, and thus, perhaps for asthetic reasons unlearned to the layman, had retained a forty-foot shamrock on its tail, although the rest of the plane had been splashed half-heartedly with flaming fire-engine-red. "St. Malichy" was painted in spritely leprechaun green across its bow, smugly suggesting that it was perhaps the only vehicle in Central America baptized in honor of an Irish patron saint. The approach to the vessel consisted of a much antiquitated cattle crossing across which an incessant cloud of dust, made up of various debatable but nonetheless unmentionable substances, blew. This, however, was looked upon as challenging sport, and the hero who managed to hold his breath for the duration of the 100 yard dash, and wave tearful farewells to his relations at the same moment, was rewarded with lusty cheers and two copies of **Business Week** when magazines were distributed.

The interior of the plane, except for a year-old **Better Homes And Gardens** and a Superman comic book, was not nearly as colorful as the exterior. "Babes in Toyland" was being piped out from behind a pile of emaciated and jaundiced lifejackets at the wrong speed, so that everyone who stepped aboard felt compelled to soft-shoe to his seat. Three stewardesses had congregated at the entrance, one breathlessly recounting her romantic adventures while the other two mumbled apathetic greetings in an assortment of incoherent languages. The fat one lisped. The thin one anxiously rubbed her sweating palms together, producing one of those supersonic whistles which

splits eardrums and draws dogs. The third one had caught her heel in the welcome mat at the door and was twirling about madly in a manner which made one both nostalgic and relieved that Chubby Checkers never got out of the Peppermint Lounge. All were dressed in maroon cotton suits of the same size and blocked the entrance in such a way that one emerged on the other side like a cork popping out of a bottle.

One's attention was drawn immediately to the rear of the plane, a round plastic lounge found so frequently in airplanes, and, as in infinite number of planes proceeding at the same moment in countless directions, the business men had congregated there to laugh and joke, the former being replaced by the latter as an increasing amount of beverages were consumed. The scene was dominated, literally and figuratively speaking, by a hugely bloated individual the shape of a lightbulb, with white hair and an anemic, bulbuous nose who was digesting **Playboy** and Sgt. Rock simultaneously, albeit with varying degrees of interest. "I'm from Texas!" he bellowed to all listeners, willing and not. "And", he added with great dubiety, "all of you are probably as good as I am!" He roared, elbowing a very uncomfortable neighbor, and proceeded to present a lengthy discourse punctuated with statistics concerning the debatable reliability of the craft and the eating habits of the Carribean shark, and, once finished, wheezed with amiable sadism and looked around the plane to see whether or not his speech had taken the desired effect. Apparently it had, for a small wrinkled lady in first class was hurriedly swallowing handfuls of aspirin, perhaps hoping that such a drug would endow the user with tinges of immortality. The Texan lightbulb shined with delight and sat down to discuss the perils of hoof and mouth disease, all the while maintaining an approving eye on the well endowed stewardess who was endeavoring to remove the heel of the other from the welcome mat.

The entire scene had met much disapproval with a small woman who had pointedly chosen a seat over the wing, next to the emergency exit. She resembled a doll that had been hung in effigy so many times that the stuffing was beginning to settle in the wrong places, and was dressed in a Sears and Roebuck sack patterned with a collection of dead flowers native to the Kansas plains which years of washing had shaped into an original Maytag creation. Her feet were shod with delicate patent leather loafers, but feeling perhaps that she had done justifiable duty to United States goodwill by appearing at an alien airport so formerly attired, her conscience soon permitted her to reach into an ample burlap handbag and pluck out basketball sneakers, which she proceeded to arrange on her feet. This craftsmanship having been completed with the minimum amount of grunts and painful wheezes, she emitted a small burp and reached once more into the bag. "Vaseline" she muttered, smacking a pair of chapped lips, "Healthiest stuff there is, Lord knows. Good for chapped hands, skin, scalp, hygiene." She dipped her hands into the mixture, and, with a sound somewhat similar to that of an elephant drowning in jello, withdrew a huge blob of the gelatinous goo. "You know these countries, filthy!" She swabbed quantities onto her left elbow. "They're all children, all of them! No ambition. Forget all the money we're giving them. The Lord helps those who help themselves, if you know what I mean. Give each mother a jar of vaseline, I say. For instance . . ." She nudged the occupant of the next seat and pointed with dripping fingers to a young woman who had managed to pull off the plastic door to the bathroom and was giggling self-consciously into the water cooler while the door seesawed on the bald head of an irate passenger. The vaseline swabbed with civil disdain as four greasy little men restored the door to its former position, forgetting that the enraged damsel was now locked firmly inside. She screamed with rage, and the Texan roared his approval.

The Texan had by this time taken full advantage of every facility in the well supplied craft, and was now fully inebriated. He strode up and down the aisle providing his audience with varying interpretations of a bellowing cow, giving candy to the little boy who was poking his sister's eyes with a fork, and winking to the little girl who was pouring catsup on her brother's head. Lowing softly, he proceeded from 1A to 20D, methodically pinching every female under the age of thirty-five, and crying "Momma!" to the rest. He was interrupted by a stewardess who stumbled lasciviously toward him, attempting to break an airline record by carrying thirty-seven trays of semi-digested food into the kitchen while the other stewardess cheered encouragingly. "Honey child!" he bellowed and kissed her soundly before she dropped the trays with a resounding clap which caused the bathroom door to fall off once more. "Filthy foreigner" grumbled the matron of the basketball sneakers and vigorously rubbed more vaseline on her facial features with fervid gestures which caused one to wonder whether the omnipotent vaseline was prepared also to prevent beasts and Texans from being able to grasp firm hold onto one's cheeks. The occupant of the next seat sighed slimily. The Texan laughed heartily and slipped on a portion of scrambled egg. Silence settled, at least momentarily, over the plane until the only discernable sound was the steady "swab, swab, swab" of the vaseline.

Dorothy Cheney



